



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND THE CHICAGO ALDERMANIC BLACK CAUCUS
INTRODUCE RESOLUTION TO HONOR JOURNALIST NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES**

*Resolution recognizes author and journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones for a lifelong
commitment to journalism and coverage of civil rights in the United States*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and members of the Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus today announced a resolution honoring Nikole Hannah-Jones, the award-winning investigative reporter covering racial injustice for *The New York Times Magazine* and creator of the landmark “1619 Project.” This ongoing initiative by the *New York Times Magazine* on the 400th anniversary of the beginning of American slavery, “aims to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of our national narrative.”

“Those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it. We are fortunate to have Nikole Hannah-Jones whose integrity and passion help our nation take a long, hard look at our history and the legacy of slavery across every facet of our society,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Nikole’s commitment to truth-telling, no matter how difficult, is admirable and urgent through its power to create the change needed to make our nation stronger and more equitable.”

In 2017, Hannah-Jones received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, known as the Genius Grant, for her work on educational inequality. She has also won a Peabody Award, a George Polk Award, National Magazine Award, and the 2018 John Chancellor distinguished journalism award from Columbia University.

“I am so deeply humbled by this tremendous honor from a city that I so deeply love. I am a child of the same Mississippi migration via the Illinois Central Railroad that shaped so much of the culture of Chicago, and while I don’t live here, I consider myself an adopted daughter,” said Hannah-Jones. “I feel a great sense of pride, particularly, in receiving this recommendation from the first Black women to ever to lead this city.”



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The 1619 Project is an ongoing initiative from The New York Times Magazine that began in August 2019, the 400th anniversary of the beginning of American slavery. In late August 1619, a ship arrived at Point Comfort in the British colony of Virginia with a cargo of 20 to 30 enslaved Africans. Its arrival inaugurated a barbaric system of chattel slavery in America that would last for the next 250 years.

“We are pleased to honor such an influential scholar and journalist who has taken a deep dive into the Trans-Atlantic human trafficking of people of African descent to build this great country as we know and see it today,” said Ald. Jason C. Ervin, Chair of the Chicago Aldermanic Black Caucus. “Her courageous work on this subject has opened the minds of many and began a conversation of healing for our community.”

The goal of The 1619 Project is to reframe American history by considering what it would mean to regard 1619 as our nation’s birth year. Although at times gruesome, the essay brings to life key moments in American history, truthfully telling stories of the inhuman and immoral treatment of black Americans in order for the country to move toward a more equitable future through acknowledgement of this shameful past, understanding how the history still influences present, and how to prepare for a more just future. Through The 1619 Project and her other work, Hannah-Jones is forcing society to confront hypocrisy and the truth of the nation’s origin and understand the contributions of black Americans.

“I applaud Ms. Hannah-Jones’s courage to spearhead a difficult conversation: “That we too sing [and built] America,” said Alderman Sophia King (4th). “And for the New York Times’s fortitude and foresight to stand behind her in this effort. I am ecstatic to honor her at City Council for her work.”

In addition to her work on The 1619 Project, Nikole co-founded the Ida B. Wells Society for Investigative Reporting in 2016, a training and mentorship organization dedicated to increasing the ranks of investigative reporters of color. She has written extensively about school desegregation across the country and chronicled the decades-long failure of the federal government to enforce the landmark 1968 Fair Housing Act.

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